

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (currently amended) A protection device comprising:

a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) having phase and neutral line side conductors for connection to a source of current and a load side for connection to a load, wherein said GFCI includes a circuit interrupting portion to automatically break a conductive path between said line side and load side upon detection of a ground fault, a reset portion to break and reset said conductive path, and a reset lockout portion to prevent said GFCI from being reset if said circuit interrupting portion is non-operational; and

a surge protection device coupled across said phase and neutral line side conductors of said GFCI, said surge protection device comprising:

a metal oxide varistor (MOV) ~~element~~ which increases in temperature when subjected to a voltage spike;

a thermal fusible layer coupled to ~~upon at least a portion of~~ a surface of said MOV ~~element~~, said thermal fusible layer capable of conducting current and adapted to ~~separate~~ form a high impedance path by separating, at least partially, or cracking, or sputtering, or melting, from the surface of the MOV ~~element~~ when the temperature of the MOV ~~element reaches~~ exceeds a predetermined temperature to form of a spark gap electrically connected in series with the MOV to help dissipate voltage surges;

a first conductor having a first end and a second end, said first end coupled directly to a first surface of said MOV ~~element~~ and said second end ~~adapted to be coupled~~ a to one of said line side conductors of said GFCI ~~source of current;~~ and

a second conductor having a third end and a fourth end, said third end coupled directly ~~coupled~~ to said thermal fusible layer and said fourth end ~~adapted to be coupled to~~ the other of said line side conductors of said GFCI ~~source of current~~ wherein said first conductor, said MOV, said thermal fusible layer and said second conductor ~~operate as an~~

~~MOV when said thermal fusible layer is held below said predetermined temperature and~~
said thermal fusible layer and said MOV ~~element~~ establish a spark gap there between
when said thermal fusible layer forms a high impedance path ~~goes above said~~
~~predetermined temperature~~ due to heat provided by said MOV ~~element~~ as it exceeds said
predetermined temperature.

2-3. (canceled)

4. (currently amended) The protection device of claim 1 wherein said MOV ~~element~~ has
a first face and a parallel, spaced apart second face and said thermal fusible ~~material~~ layer covers
less than the full extent of said first face.

5. (currently amended) The protection device of claim 4 further comprising:
a layer of insulation on said thermal fusible ~~material~~ layer; and
a connection tail extending from said thermal fusible ~~material~~ layer onto said layer of
insulation and said second conductor third end is coupled to said thermal fusible ~~material~~ layer
through said connection tail.

6.(currently amended) The protection device of claim 5 wherein said thermal fusible
~~material~~ layer and said layer of insulation ~~ore~~ are generally concentric and circular.

7.(currently amended) The protection device of claim 1 wherein said thermal fusible
~~material~~ layer is rectangular and covers less than the full extent of said surface of said MOV.

8.(currently amended) The protection device of claim 7 further comprising:
a rectangular layer of insulation upon said rectangular thermal fusible ~~material~~ layer; and

a connection tail extending from said thermal fusible ~~material~~ layer onto said layer of insulation and said second conductor third end is coupled to said thermal fusible ~~material~~ layer through said connection tail.

9.(currently amended) The protection device of claim 1 wherein said MOV ~~element~~ has a first face and a parallel, spaced apart second face and said thermal fusible ~~material~~ layer is of a cruciform shape mounted adjacent said first face.

10. (currently amended) A protection device for a metal oxide varistor (MOV) which can protect a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) comprising:

a GFCI having phase and neutral line side conductors for connection to a source of current and a load side for connection to a load, wherein said GFCI includes a circuit interrupting portion to automatically break a conductive path between said line side and load side upon detection of a ground fault, a reset portion to break and reset said conductive path, and a reset lockout portion to prevent said GFCI from being reset if said circuit interrupting portion is non-operational; and

a surge protection device coupled across said phase and neutral line side conductors of said GFCI, said surge protection device comprising:

a first semi-circular segment MOV ~~element~~ defined by a first straight side edge and a first curved side edge;

a second semi-circular segment MOV ~~element~~ defined by a second straight side edge and a second curved side edge;

said first semi-circular segment and said second semi-circular segment generally describing a circular MOV ~~element~~ when said first straight side edge is held parallel with said second straight side edge;

said first semi-circular segment MOV ~~element~~ and said second semi-circular segment MOV ~~element~~ heat up when exposed to voltage spikes;

said first semi-circular segment having a first front surface and a first rear surface, said second semi-circular segment having a second front surface and a second rear surface;

a thermal fusible ~~material~~ layer extending between said first semi-circular segment first straight edge surface and said second semi-circular segment second straight edge surface, said thermal fusible ~~material later~~ layer capable of conducting current there through and adapted to form a high impedance path by separating, at least partially, or cracking, or sputtering, or melting, from the first and second MOV segments when the temperature of the MOV exceeds having a predetermined temperature at which it melts to form a spark gap electrically connected in series with the MOV to help dissipate voltage surges;

a first conductor having a first end and a second end, said first end coupled to one of said first front or first rear surfaces of said first semi-circular segment and said second end coupled to a one of said line side conductors of said GFCI ~~source of current~~; and

a second conductor having a third end and a fourth end, said third end coupled to one of said second front or second rear surfaces of said second semi-circular segments and said fourth end coupled to the other of said line side conductors of said GFCI ~~source of current~~ whereby current is permitted to flow through said first conductor, said first semi-circular segment, said thermal fusible material layer, said second semi-circular segment and said second conductor when said thermal fusible material layer is held below said predetermined temperature and said first straight edge surface of said first semi-circular segment and said second straight edge surface of said second semi-circular segment establish a spark gap there between when said thermal fusible layer forms a high impedance path ~~goes above said predetermined temperature and melts~~ due to the heat provided by said first and second MOV segments as it exceeds said predetermined temperature.

11.(currently amended) The protection device of claim 10 further comprising;

a layer of insulation surrounding said first front surface, said first curved side surface, said first rear surface, a rear surface of said thermal fusible ~~material~~ layer, said second rear surface, said second curved side surface, said second front surface and a front surface of said thermal fusible ~~material~~ layer.

12. (currently amended) The protection device of claim ~~12~~ 11 wherein said layer of insulation has a top surface and a bottom surface.

13. (currently amended) The protection device of claim ~~13~~ 12 further comprising:
an air gap extending from said layer of insulation top surface to said bottom surface along one side of said thermal fusible ~~material~~ layer.